

## Rebuild Roanoke-Chowan Brings New Energy to Business

**T**ony Bennett has done it. Johnny Mathis, too. Now, Rebuild Roanoke-Chowan is doing it—bridging the generation gap, that is.

Lead partner Choanoke Area Development Association (CADA) is demonstrating the benefits of the Rebuild program to its senior citizens and young adults.

### GETTING GENERATION X INVOLVED

In the summer of 1998, twenty area youth joined the Rebuild Roanoke-Chowan team, through the Summer Youth Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) program.

The purpose of the JTPA is to provide job training to low-income young adults "facing serious barriers to employment." The Rebuild Roanoke-Chowan partnership did just that, by teaching the participants (aged 16-21) how to conduct Federal Energy Decision System (FEDS) computerized energy audits.

After the training, the 20 "FEDS rookies" audited 100 buildings and submitted their data to the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, which analyzed the data and presented results to the building owners who volunteered to participate in the project.

The collaboration proved quite valuable to all participants. Twenty young adults explored career opportunities and learned new job skills, and the owners of 100 buildings received free energy audits. Of course, this work also helped the Rebuild Roanoke-Chowan partnership get one step closer to achieving an important program goal: to identify unnecessary energy expenditures and re-inject the savings into the local economy.

### MAKING THE OLD NEW AGAIN

Senior citizens from Woodland, NC, are benefiting from the Rebuild America program, too. CADA, together with the City of Woodland, retrofitted the Woodland-Olney School (listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1977) and adapted it for use as low-income senior citizen housing. The Rebuild Roanoke-Chowan partnership is pleased with the outcome of this project. As Sallie Surface, CADA Executive Director,



The Woodland-Olney school will soon be senior housing.

## Partnership Facts:

### TARGETED BUILDINGS:

Woodland-Olney School Building, two municipal buildings, one commercial building and six other municipal and commercial buildings

### SQUARE FOOTAGE:

500,000 square feet

### ESTIMATED ENERGY SAVINGS:

20-25%

### FUNDING MECHANISMS:

State grant (from "Stripper Well" funds), Historic Preservation tax credits, and Low-Income Housing tax credits and low interest loans

### NEW & NOTABLE INNOVATIONS:

Using JTPA participants to conduct energy audits; combining energy efficiency upgrades with adaptive reuse of historic properties.

### COMPLETION DATE:

On-going

### TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ROANOKE-CHOWAN REBUILD AMERICA PARTNERSHIP:

**Mr. Melvin C. Powers**  
Manager of Community Services  
Cherokee Area Development  
Association, Inc.  
Community Services  
P.O. Box 530  
Rich Square, NC 27869  
Work Phone: 252-539-4155, ext. 129  
Fax Phone: 252-539-2048  
E-mail: cada@coastalnet.com

explained: "This building is integral to this little community (of 1,000 citizens)." In fact, many of the seniors who will use the Woodland-Olney building were once students there.

### PAYING FOR THE UPGRADES

The first phase of energy retrofits at the Woodland-Olney School (and on nine other municipal and commercial buildings) was funded by a \$100,000 grant awarded to CADA by the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Energy Division.

The state drew these funds from an unusual source—"Stripper Well" funds awarded to the state as compensation for past overcharges on petroleum products. In doing so, the state turned a negative into a positive—using fossil fuel industry money to pay for energy conservation measures.

Other renovations were funded by various tax credits. Since the Woodland-Olney School previously was designated as a historic landmark, CADA secured historic preservation tax credits for the work. CADA also received low-income housing tax credits, and used these to obtain loans for renovation costs.

Securing these tax credits was a top priority for CADA, because they expanded the pool of money available for renovations. However, the credits come with strings attached (such as design requirements), so compliance can be very time-consuming.

CADA Executive Director Sallie Surface noted that it took 2 years to "jump through the hoops" and secure historic preservation and low-income tax credits. However, there is no doubt that, for the partnership and the residents of the "new and improved" Woodland-Olney School building, it was worth the time and effort.

### ON OTHER FRONTS

The Rebuild Roanoke-Chowan partnership has begun energy retrofits on nine additional municipal and commercial buildings. Energy audits were conducted on two buildings in Murfreesboro, NC: the Municipal Building and Southern Bank.

Other targeted buildings are the Municipal Building for the town of Aulander, the CADA office complex and the Mill Village areas of the town of Roanoke Rapids.

### THE BROAD UMBRELLA

Rebuild Roanoke-Chowan has also teamed with the ENERGY STAR® Small Business program and local area banks to offer business owners low-interest loans.

The Rebuild Roanoke-Chowan partnership has demonstrated that the Rebuild America umbrella is broad, in this case, broad enough to cover both young and old.



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